



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

FROM:  Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP, Hon. ASLA, Executive Officer

DATE: December 5, 2007

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item V(n): Consideration of resolution authorizing acquisition of properties in Los Angeles County Chapter 8 Agreements 2536 and 2538, using public, private, and in-lieu-fee mitigation funds, Antelope Valley, unincorporated Los Angeles County.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing acquisition of properties in Chapter 8 Agreements 2536 and 2538, using public, private, and in-lieu-fee mitigation funds, Antelope Valley, unincorporated Los Angeles County.

Background: The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) commonly enters into Chapter 8 Agreements with Los Angeles County to acquire tax defaulted properties. The MRCA has acquired over 1,500 acres through this process.

The County has provided Agreements to sign. Chapter 8 Agreement Number 2536 contains 8 parcels totaling 14.72 acres, and Chapter 8 Agreement Number 2538 contains 1 parcel totaling 2.6 acres in the 5th Supervisorial District of Los Angeles County. In order for the County Treasurer and Tax Collector to finalize these agreements, the MRCA must provide a resolution authorizing the acquisition of the parcels.

The Los Angeles County Treasurer and Tax Collectors office has issued a letter stating that this Agreement, along with others, must be completed and returned to their offices by November 26, 2007. MRCA staff has arranged an extension to December 7, 2007. Any parcels that are not approved for acquisition will be put back on the tax list for the next auction to be available for public purchase. Staff will provide the Treasurer and Tax Collectors office with the signed Agreements on December 6, 2007.

Agreement Number 2536

APN	Acreage	Location	Price
3064-029-028	1.84	N. of Hwy 138 at San Bernardino County Line	\$4,000
3064-029-031	1.84	N. of Hwy 138 at San Bernardino County Line	\$4,500
3064-029-034	1.84	N. of Hwy 138 at San Bernardino County Line	\$4,000
3064-029-035	1.84	N. of Hwy 138 at San Bernardino County Line	\$3,500
3064-029-038	1.84	N. of Hwy 138 at San Bernardino County Line	\$4,000
3064-029-041	1.84	N. of Hwy 138 at San Bernardino County Line	\$4,500
3064-029-042	1.84	N. of Hwy 138 at San Bernardino County Line	\$4,500
3064-029-044	1.84	N. of Hwy 138 at San Bernardino County Line	\$4,000
Totals	14.72		\$33,000

Agreement Number 2538

APN	Acreage	Location	Price
3256-011-002	2.6	West of 190 th Street W., south of Avenue B, western Lancaster.	\$6,000
Totals	2.6		\$6,000

The tables above detail the parcels, size, general location, and current cost to the MRCA. This cost estimate does not include the fees that could be as much as

\$3,000, bringing the total cost for the two Agreements to the area of \$45,000. The cost estimate is projected through December 2007. Unfortunately, the cost of the parcel increases substantially every year as penalties and back taxes increase. That rate of increase is approximately 1.5 percent per month. An attached aerial photograph shows the parcel boundaries.

All eight parcels in Agreement 2536 are part of a isolated subdivision. The parcels contain numerous Joshua trees and healthy desert scrub. The presence of developed residential lots just east of these parcels suggests that this stretch of Joshua tree woodland is likely to be compromised in the future.

The single parcel in Agreement 2538 also contains healthy Joshua tree woodland. Staff visited both sites in October to confirm the habitat quality and density of Joshua trees.

Regulatory agencies for the Antelope Valley are requiring acquisition of Joshua tree woodland habitat for impact mitigation for some projects. All parcels addressed in this report are suitable acquisitions for that purpose. Staff is pursuing in lieu mitigation fees for Joshua tree woodland.